



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

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STATE SUPERINTENDENT

July 11, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents and
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Venessa A. Keesler, Ph.D. *V. Keesler*
Deputy Superintendent, Education Services
Joseph A. Martineau, Ph.D. *JAM*
Deputy Superintendent, Accountability Services

SUBJECT: Public Comment Period for Proposed Amendment to Michigan's
Approved Request for ESEA Flexibility

In July 2012, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) approved Michigan's request for flexibility in implementing certain requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

This flexibility approval allows local school districts more freedom in how they use some federal dollars to improve student achievement and close achievement gaps; recognizes schools that are meeting or exceeding achievement goals; ensures that all students have access to effective educators; and includes a new accountability scorecard to measure student achievement and growth in schools and districts. Moreover, the approved ESEA flexibility alleviates the impending consequences of the NCLB requirement that 100% of students demonstrate academic proficiency by 2014, replacing the mandate and subsequent consequences with an appropriate timeline and targeted supports to meet student growth and proficiency goals.

As part of the request, Michigan pledged to continuously monitor the implementation of the ESEA Flexibility and make changes as necessary in order to best serve students, families, and educators. Two amendments to the approved ESEA Flexibility Request were approved in December 2012,

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and three additional amendments were approved in February 2013. Ongoing implementation of the ESEA Flexibility, and continued discussions with stakeholders, have highlighted the need for one additional amendment to the approved request to make improvements that will facilitate and refine the implementation process.

An additional amendment was proposed and presented for public comment from June 20-27, 2013. The proposed amendment would have exempted special education centers/center-based programs from identification on the Priority, Focus, and Reward Schools lists and included special education centers/center-based programs in the annual statewide top-to-bottom ranking. Comments were received during the aforementioned public comment period that prompted a change to the proposed amendment. The revised amendment will now exempt special education centers/center-based programs from identification on the Priority, Focus, and Reward Schools lists and from inclusion on the annual statewide top-to-bottom ranking.

The revised amendment to the approved Request for ESEA Flexibility is now available for review and public comment at http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-37818_60094---,00.html.

Public comment will be open through 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 18, 2013.

All comments should be submitted to ESEAFlexibility@michigan.gov.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance